

REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS

PRESENTED BY

THEM KJAR, DIRECTOR YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT GAME DEPARTMENT

TO

THE PREDATOR CONTROL CONFERENCE

HELD AT THE PALLISER HOTEL IN CALGARY, ALBERTA

AUGUST 31ST/SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1954

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation

Y₂MoO₇ is a typical layered structure, in which the

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to participate in this very important Predator Control Conference, the kind of a Conference which in my opinion is long overdue and on behalf of the Yukon Territorial Game Department I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. F.J.G. Cunningham, Director of the Northern Administration; Mr. Fred Fraser, Acting Director of the same Department; Mr. J. A. Hutchison, Director of National Parks; Mr. E. L. Paynter, Game Commissioner, Saskatchewan and Mr. W. Winston Mair, Chief of Canadian Wildlife Service, for having taken the initiative and making this Conference possible, which will enable the heads of the different Game Departments and their staff to sit down and survey the predator control methods so far used and exchange information and ideas as to future ways and means whereby a co-ordinated effort can be made to combat the predator menace, the control of which is vital for game conservation and good management.

In the matter of predators we are all faced with the fact that whereas the sale of Hunting Licences is yearly increasing at a tremendous rate throughout Canada and the United States, the consequence of which is a proportional increase in the killing of our big game and game bird, most unfortunately however this ratio of kills does not apply in respect to our predators. Added to this dilemma are a great deal of other factors with which the progress of civilization is forcing our remaining game population farther and farther back from former years happy hunting grounds.

In the case of Yukon Territory the tremendous stride with which we also here are progressing has left its mark in respect to game population. When you realise that only twelve years ago there was no Alaska Highway, no Canal Road and no Airports within our boundaries, and transportation at that time was a long and tedious journey. To-day we have up-to-date daily connections with the outside world and besides this our new road system now makes it possible to travel over good roads practically over the southern half of the Yukon Territory, roads

which/.....

which have all been built through virgin game country never disturbed by man before.

Transportation by pontoon equipped planes, motor cars and power boats is to-day the common means of bringing the hunter from his starting point into the heart of the game country and to climax this easy accessibility is the equally up-to-date sportsman bringing with him extremely high-power rifles, telescopic sights, powerful binoculars etc. etc. Against such formidable obstacles we can never hope our game to survive if the game at the same time also must face the cruel onslaught of the predators.

There is simply no room for both man and predator. Nature can never hope to balance itself unless man, who has upset that balance, takes steps to rectify and kill the enemies of our game.

At this point I would like to bring to your attention a very interesting Pheasant nesting study which was undertaken by the State Game Commission of North Dakota in the Spring of 1953. Perhaps you are acquainted with this particular report, nevertheless I feel it is noteworthy of repeating.

This nesting survey took place in a four section area in south western North Dakota by upland game Biologists of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department and disclosed that of 123 Pheasant nests under surveillance, only five escaped destruction or abandonment. The result of the survey, first of its kind attempted, revealed the following shocking facts.

Predators destroyed 81 nests; late snow and unusually heavy rain forced hen abandonment of 24; farming operations destroyed 12; 1 nest was ruined by a horse; 3 nests of eggs were hatched successfully and 2 were still in the process of incubation.

Of the 81 nests destroyed by predators, 28 were identified positively as having been ruined by skunks and another 10 as very probably having been taken by skunks. Badgers accounted for 14, while squirrel or weasel took another 7. 1 nest was destroyed by a domestic cat and 5 by crows. 16 of the nests were destroyed by unidentified predators. 3 Duck nests were also located in the surveyed area. All three were destroyed by predators.

In/.....

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
University of Alberta Libraries

In the face of such predator destruction, we may well wonder how many young chicks from the 5 nests left undisturbed actually did survive to reach maturity.

The extreme low price on furs prevailing throughout the last five or six years is another factor which has discouraged trappers from tending to their traplines during the season, with the result that the predators have increased in all parts of Canada and the United States, except such places where effective control measures have taken place, particularly against rabies. Alberta has, in this respect, made a very notable contribution.

We have in the Yukon to-day 465 registered Trappers whom in the peak year of bounty payment (1947) received a total payment of \$11,130 for wolf (\$20) and Coyote (\$10)

The last year our bounty system was in force (1952) this amount had dwindled to a mere \$890. This drastic reduction in bounty payment however must not be taken to mean that our wolf and coyote population had decreased in the same proportion as the payments made. Far from it. There are two main reasons which cause this drastic reduction in the taking of wolf and coyote :-

1. Extremely low fur prices
2. The boom throughout Yukon in prospecting and mining, road and building construction,

which have enabled trappers to obtain employment elsewhere at a much greater profit than a seasons fur catch could ever bring.

Consequently the predators - wolf, coyote, wolverine, fox and lynx, have increased to the detriment of our big game and game birds, regardless of bounty payments which we are satisfied is not the answer to predator control.

The question of the control of predators in the Yukon, as in all other areas of the North American continent, has been one of confusion and controversy. Bounty has been paid for many years on wolves and coyotes, and the total payments made since 1898 for this purpose exceeds \$100,000. Legislation to repeal the payment of bounties was passed at the Spring session of the Yukon Council, 1952.

Those/.....

Those to whom bounties have been paid have in most cases taken predators as a result of casual encounters on trapping operations rather than the result of an effort to destroy wolf for the sake of conservation.

In order to replace the bounty system, Yukon Game Department during the months of March and April 1953 started an experimental lethal campaign by using ski-equipped planes, adopting the successful method used by Alaska Fish and Wildlife Service Predator Control branch, as well as B. C. Game Commission. Through the splendid co-operation of Mr. Maurice Kelly, Supervisor of their Predator Control branch, I had the opportunity of participating in a four hours flight out of Juneau, Alaska, where they established a number of lethal stations and further, at the commencement of our own experimental campaign had the valuable help and assistance of their most experienced wolf hunter, Mr. Frank Glazer of Fairbanks.

We covered through the Yukon nearly 4000 miles and established 20 lethal stations. The poison used was strychnine pellets prepared by the Wildlife Research Laboratory, Denver, Colorado. Each pellet we encased in a small cube of pork fat which was coated with Seal meal giving a scent apparently attractive to the wolf and coyote. 2000 poison pellets were prepared and 1500 lbs. of bait was all distributed on suitable lakes where game and wolf concentration was in evidence. The bait itself was not poisoned, thereby preventing such bait that washed ashore after ice break-up, being a menace to other animals.

As a result of this experimental campaign we were able to retrieve 32 wolf from 13 of these stations, the rest having been obliterated by heavy snow.

Alaska Wildlife Service officials estimate that the number of kills retrieved are only about 15% of actual kills. Continuation of this method was again carried out during the months of March and April 1954, with a total of over 3000 air miles flown. 34 lethal stations were established and about 1400 lbs. of bait and 2000 poison pellets again distributed in three specific areas within our boundaries where wolf concentration was plainly in evidence.

In/.....

In view of last years experience concerning repeat flights to check lethal stations, we found it unnecessary this year to continue these extra expensive flights but from reports later received I have good reason to believe that the 34 lethal stations established have killed a great number of wolves and coyotes and I am convinced that this method of distribution of lethal pellets is by far the most effective.

Besides the establishment of these lethal stations this Department has also issued all our Chief Guides and six Park Wardens with a special poison permit, the result of which, this Spring, was the voluntary taking of a total of 32 wolf and 15 coyote, which as a first experiment was very gratifying.

Handicapped as this Game Department is for lack of funds and necessary paid help, we can therefore not hope to accomplish more than a small part of what could and should be done if sufficient funds were made available for an all out lethal campaign and this would equally apply to the lack of scientific research and census taking of our game as well as predator within our boundaries, which so far is sorely lacking.

Our game is a valuable crop from which Yukon residents yearly depend on both in the way of food consumption as well as revenue from our many big game hunters who yearly visit our Territory, leaving here an estimated amount of nearly a quarter of a million Dollars.

Yukon Territory holds to-day the last stand of big game throughout the whole of Canada, a wonderful heritage which we at all costs must protect before it is too late.

It is therefore my hope that this Conference will benefit us all and that a co-ordinated realistic predator control programme will result herefrom, and furthermore that we enlist the valuable help and assistance of our Press, Sports magazines, all Sportsmen's organisations, nature lovers and farmers throughout the land, in a concerted drive against our predators, a help and backing without which I am afraid we shall not succeed.

Date Due

ykb			
to 11			

49536

Pam:502.7:(*430)
KJAR

KJAR, THEM

AUTHOR

Remarks and observations presented

TITLE by Them Kjar, director Yukon
Territorial Government Game Dept...

DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME	DATE DUE
	Jana	

49536

Pam: 502.7:(*430) KJAR

KJAR, Them

Remarks and observations
presented by Them Kjar,

#49536

BOREAL INSTITUTE FOR NORTHERN STUDIES, LIBRARY
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, ALBERTA T6G 2E9
CANADA

University of Alberta Library



0 1620 0329 2735